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LETTERS

OF

NEPTUNE, &c.

[Price EIGHTEEN PENCE.]

LETTERS

OF

NEPTUNE

AND

GRACCHUS,

Addreſſed to the

P—— of *W*——,

And other diſtinguiſhed CHARACTERS;

Now firſt collected from their original Publication in the MORNING POST.

LONDON:

Printed for M. SMITH; and ſold by the Bookſellers of *Piccadilly*, *Charing-Croſs*, the *Royal Exchange*, and at N° 46, *Fleet-ſtreet*: it may alſo be had of the Bookſellers at *Briſtol*, *Bath*, *Oxford*, *Cambridge*, and *Dublin*.

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1784

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE Letters, first printed in The Morning Post, *are allowed by all who have perused them to be so eminent for their literary merit, that it would seem a reflection on the taste of the Nation, and the credit of the Press, if they were abandoned to that oblivion, to which every composition that appears only in a News-paper must unavoidably be consigned.*

Another reason has had its weight to induce the Publisher to collect them together; namely, the contempt which many persons have, or affect to have, for diurnal prints, though it is well known

known they have uſhered into the world the works of the moſt brilliant Writers (particularly in the political line) for which this Country has been diſtinguiſhed.

The Letters of JUNIUS *need not be adverted to, which afford inſtruction as well as entertainment to this hour, though firſt detailed in a Morning Paper.*

A compariſon between the two productions is not intended; yet there is no doubt but the LETTERS *of* NEPTUNE *have had the greateſt ſhare of public admiration, ſince thoſe of that inimitable Writer.*

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

WHILE your irregularities were confined within the circle of juvenile indiſcretion, and your conduct could be accounted for in the natural progreſs of the paſſions, your exceſſes, numerous as they have been, excited indeed our wonder, but never provoked our indignation.—We be-

held you emerge from the nurſery, with even paternal affection;—every heart was devoted to your intereſt; and it was neither difficult, nor unworthy of you, to have preſerved thoſe prejudices which had been generouſly formed in your favour. The intemperance of your youth gave no offence; and in the commencement of your career, it was never once ſuſpected that we ſhould have occaſion to execrate the object whom we adored.

Such, Sir, were the advantages under which you entered into ſociety; and give me leave to inform you, that you muſt have been extremely indefatigable, to have effaced ſo effectually thoſe favourable impreſſions, and to have changed the current of opinion

nion againſt you in ſo ſhort a time. To your imprudent choice of friends may be attributed your preſent painful ſituation. It was your misfortune to ſelect thoſe for your companions, who, having neither fortune nor character to loſe, were ready to conduct you into all the extravagancies of the meaneſt and moſt dangerous debaucheries. Their profligacy rendered them the willing pandars to your pleaſures, while their poverty involved you in their profuſion and neceſſities.

The Nation feels the conſequences of theſe complicated evils, and beholds, with equal aſtoniſhment and indignation, a progreſs uncommonly rapid from bad to worſe, and which muſt eventually terminate in ſerious

miſchief to Yourſelf and your Country.

It muſt have been no leſs mortifying to your Royal Father, than diſgraceful to yourſelf, that the firſt public act of your life was diſtinguiſhed by an indecent oppoſition to the meaſures of his Government, and the conſtitutional rights of his Crown. It would be difficult to account for the motives of ſo decided and ſo extraordinary a conduct, if the party with whom you have condeſcended to aſſociate, had not revealed the conditions of your contract with Mr. *Fox*. The engagements on your part have been executed with the moſt active and pointed fidelity—with a firmneſs which has triumphed over every obligation

gation of filial duty and reſpect, and rendered you as inſenſible to the general intereſts of your Fellow-citizens, as the Faction whom you patroniſe are deſtitute of every principle of honour.—I will paſs over the moral turpitude of irritating a *Son* againſt a *Father*;—the infamy of the action will fall on the incendiary.

It is more the object of this Addreſs to expoſe the fallacy of the *Right Honourable* Gentleman, than to reprehend or amend him. Long habits have rendered him incorrigible, and admonition becomes uſeleſs where there is neither ſhame nor ſentiment to give it force.—He has *promiſed* "TO PAY "OFF YOUR DEBTS, AND INCREASE "YOUR INCOME;" and for this *valu-*

able

able conſideration you have been ſeduced to take a decided part againſt your Sovereign—to exert your influence againſt his prerogative—and to fly in the face of the whole kingdom.

Is it poſſible, Sir, that thoſe who have had the important charge of your education, could have concealed from your knowledge the form and ſpirit of the Conſtitution?—Is it neceſſary to inform you, that before the CROMWELL of the Times can perform his promiſe, two events, not very likely to happen, muſt poſitively take place? He muſt be reſtored to power in the firſt inſtance—and, in the ſecond, the Nation muſt conſent to the increaſe of income, with which you have been flattered and deluded.

The

The public, Sir, are under no obligation to diſcharge thoſe debts which your profuſion has created; nor is it very probable that, conſidering the deplorable ſtate of their finances, they will be eaſily prevailed upon to enlarge an income already ſufficient for all the purpoſes of your preſent eſtabliſhment. Theſe circumſtances, perhaps, have been artfully concealed from you, as well as the impoveriſhed ſtate of the kingdom, which will not admit of wanton and unneceſſary expenditures of the public money.

A war, ruinous in every reſpect, idly begun, and more idly conducted, has oppreſſed the people with innumerable taxes, and rendered them almoſt incapable of ſuſtaining any additional

burthens.

burthens. Yet the Author of this unfortunate and diſgraceful war, whom you have every reaſon to execrate, is honoured with your confidence, and, deſtitute of pride and integrity, is content to act a ſervile and ſubordinate part to the Man who has repeatedly menaced him with impeachment and the block!

The calamities occaſioned by the weak and corrupt adminiſtration of his Lordſhip, will terminate only with the empire; they will be felt to the lateſt period of our political exiſtence. The millions ſquandered in obtaining majorities in both Houſes of Parliament, will render a ſyſtem of the ſtricteſt œconomy indiſpenſable:—and theſe *truths*, too obvious to be unknown

known to you, ſhould at leaſt have taught you to reſtrain your extravagance. The plea of youth affords *you* no excuſe. You ſtand in a different predicament from that of a private gentleman:—his perſon and property are anſwerable for the debts he contracts; bankruptcy and a priſon terminate his career, and the *Nation* feels no inconvenience from his follies: but you, Sir, have *no property*; your annual income is an annual donation, which may be withdrawn or withheld; and whatever Mr. Fox, and his wretched dependants, may aſſert to the contrary, the People of England will never ſubmit to recompenſe thoſe who injure and inſult them.

But ſuppoſing, for a moment, that

this Gentleman was reinſtated, and ſupported by a Parliament totally at his devotion,—what ſecurity have you for the performance of his promiſe?—Are you ſo little read in his hiſtory and character, as not to know that he has already ſacrificed every engagement, even the moſt ſacred, to his ambition; and that his object is to reduce you and your auguſt family to be cyphers in the nation?—He calls himſelf THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE. At the next baptiſm he may, perhaps, aſſume the bolder name of PROTECTOR, and convince you of your error, by poſſeſſing himſelf of Carleton-Houſe, and removing you to the Tower.——Happily, Sir, the nation has taken the alarm; and there is little danger either of his coming into power, or of his involving

involving his country in all the horrors of a civil war. If the latter, however, contrary to appearances, ſhould happen, it will not be an improper queſtion to aſk yourſelf, What part you will be *permitted* to take in the conteſt?

After having ſaid thus much, it only remains for me to apologiſe for the liberty which I have preſumed to take; a liberty which loyalty to my Sovereign, and affection for my Country, have occaſioned, and which the motives muſt juſtify.

NEPTUNE.

LET-

LETTER II.

SIR,

IT is a maxim univerſally admitted, that the people ſhould have but *one* opinion of their Sovereign; and this maxim holds equally good, when applied to the Preſumptive Heir to the Crown.—It would be an idle waſte of time to explain to you what that opinion *ought* to be.—Thoſe to whom your education has been confided, cannot poſſibly have permitted you to advance to maturity in utter ignorance of ſo important a truth.

Their

Their characters authorife us to believe, that every obligation on their part has been faithfully fulfilled; and we muſt attribute the failure on your's to the pernicious influence of a Man who has inſinuated himſelf into your favour, in full confidence of obtaining a triumph over his Sovereign, and his Country. The impreſſion of this idea would have afforded you an excuſe for the errors into which you have been betrayed, if an obſtinate adherence to the very principles of the Faction did not continue to ſtain every action of your life. It is impoſſible, Sir, that you can be unacquainted with the public opinion, on the part you have taken;—not, indeed, that it has been communicated to you by the MAN OF THE PEOPLE.—To ſuppoſe that *Gentleman*

tleman capable of ſuch an exertion of friendſhip, would be giving him credit for a virtue, to which, I am perſuaded, he does not aſpire.

No, Sir! you have learnt it in the well-founded, though intemperate reſentment of the People, whoſe honeſt indignation, provoked by your complicated offences, forced them to violate the limits of reſpect and decency, and hurl their ſentiments in your very face.

I know that you have been taught to deſpiſe the public opinion, and that the unremitting endeavours of your *little Pandemonium* have been exerted to inſpire you with a contempt for popular applauſe.—Adopt the idea, and your future life will be miſerable.

Be

Be aſſured, Sir, that Popularity is the beſt ſecurity for a Prince.—It is not ſo fluctuating as you have been told.—Private individuals have found it precarious, becauſe it has been generouſly advanced to them on the credit of profeſſions which they never intended to realiſe, and they have been ſunk into obſcurity on their impoſtures being diſcovered.—But this is juſtice, not caprice.—Profeſſions of Patriotiſm are unneceſſary, where the power exiſts of carrying them into immediate execution. Our opinion of *you* will ever be regulated by your conduct;—*deſerve* well, and you will never have occaſion to reproach the multitude with inconſtancy, or a want of affection.

Unhappily

Unhappily, Sir, the bias of your education has given way to the influence of bad examples. To fall into the hands of pimps, gamblers, and proſtitutes, is among the common accidents to which every young man is expoſed on his entering into ſociety, and may be eaſily corrected. But you, Sir, diſdaining the progreſſive ſtages to diſhonour, ſtart from the nurſery, into public life, the very prop and hero of Faction, and attach yourſelf to men of ruined fortunes and characters, who, under the ſanction of your countenance, have attempted to annihilate, at once, the prerogative of the Crown, and the rights of their Fellow-citizens. You have, however, had the mortification to find, that the credit of your name could not avail them. They have been

driven

driven from power with every mark of ignominy; and it is with equal indignation and concern we ſee you perſevere in your attachment to Men, with whom it is impoſſible to be connected without partaking of their infamy. To war againſt experience, is to give defeat the preference to conqueſt, and to hold honour and happineſs at defiance.

Believe me, Sir, the people are not to be awed by the ſplendor of your rank into an approbation of your errors, much leſs will they be diſpoſed to ſupport them; and you will do well to remember, that it is among the moſt common maxims of prudence, to avoid thoſe conteſts in which *much* may be loſt, and *nothing* can be gained.

If the various exceſſes into which you have plunged yourſelf, with a precipitancy unexampled in the annals of this country, have involved you in pecuniary difficulties, the means of extricating yourſelf are very far removed from the violence and indecency of an oppoſition to the meaſures of Government.—Reſtore the late Miniſtry to the truſt which they have abuſed, and you will find yourſelf as diſtant from the performance of their *golden* promiſes, as you are at this inſtant, even ſuppoſing them ready to falſify their characters by keeping their word with you.

The India-Houſe may, indeed, be removed from Leadenhall-ſtreet to Brookes's by their reſtoration, and the revenues

revenues of Indoſtan be tranſmitted to a Faro Bank. The young Colonel may alſo do a violence to his principles, and pay off ſome of his annuities; but you muſt be very little read in the hiſtory of mankind, if you can ſuppoſe that a ſolitary rupee will ever be permitted to ſtray towards Carleton-Houſe.

I am very far from wiſhing you to be confined within the limits of a ſcanty and penurious income. I would have it fully equal to your exalted birth, and expectations; but in fixing your Eſtabliſhment, an attention muſt be paid to the finances of the Nation. The former muſt ever depend upon the latter; and it may, perhaps, be matter of information to you, that every new

new tax, under our enormous load of debt, is an advance towards a REVOLUTION. This is a ſerious and an alarming truth, which ſhould awaken you, Sir, to a ſenſe of œconomy, for the ſake of yourſelf and your family, ſhould you have no regard for the Empire to which you have an hereditary claim. The ſpirit of enterpriſe belongs properly to the neceſſitous and ambitious; and under our accumulated diſtreſſes, it is neceſſary to exclude both theſe deſcriptions of men from every avenue to power, that the Country may be benefited by the ſhort interval of Peace, and a prudent Adminiſtration.

The political relation which you have to the Conſtitution, gives the meaneſt of your fellow-citizens an intereſt

intereſt in your conduct. The fate of millions is involved in yours, and the danger to be apprehended from your alliance with a gang of ADVENTURERS, is ſufficient to alarm even confidence itſelf. No wonder then if the people, anxious to avert the miſchiefs with which they are threatened by the faction you ſupport, ſhould endeavour to ſhame you out of riot and bad company, and recall you to a ſenſe of your dignity, to the conſideration of thoſe tenures by which the Imperial Diadem is held. You cannot be uninformed that the violation of them coſt one Monarch his life, and another his CROWN; but it is poſſible you may have forgotten that YOU are liable to the ſame penalties.

NEPTUNE.

LETTER III.

SIR,

WHEN you imprudently embarked in the ſervice of Oppoſition, it did not occur to you, perhaps, that it ought to be an invariable maxim with every branch of the Royal Family, to obſerve the ſtricteſt neutrality towards the various Factions which are perpetually contending for an aſcendancy in the Government; and ſince your fatal and diſgraceful alliance with Mr. Fox, it has been one of the principal objects of *that* Gentleman's

Gentleman's attention, to ſeduce you from the conſideration of a truth, no leſs obvious than important, by plunging you into all the exceſſes of expenſive riot and diſſipation, as if it was his fixed determination that *your* ruin ſhould precede *that* of the Empire.

Your diſhonourable intimacy with the moſt profligate characters in the kingdom, has not only excited an alarm among all ranks of people at home, but become the common table-converſation of every *petit cabaret* in Europe, where you are cenſured more for your want of pride, than your want of prudence; and while Foreigners behold, with ſcorn and aſtoniſhment, the *Heir to the Crown of Great Britain* degrading himſelf below

low the level of even the meaneſt of his worthleſs companions, your Fellow-citizens lament, with the moſt affectionate concern, your obſtinate attachment to Men who have long ſince forfeited every pretention to the confidence of their Country, and who have neither talents nor integrity equal to the employments which they audaciouſly demand.

A momentary reflection would be ſufficient to awaken you to a ſenſe of your ſituation; but your aſſociates, aware of the danger of leaving you to yourſelf, have artfully contrived to keep you in the vortex of diſſipation, leſt a lucid interval ſhould reſtore you from the delirium of pleaſure, to the exerciſe of your underſtanding.

They

They are conſcious that they muſt periſh, whenever you have the virtue to *reſume* yourſelf; and they do well to keep you in profound ignorance of the dangers which ſurround you.

In the black catalogue of their aggravated guilt, the infamy of playing off the *Son* againſt the *Father*, is not the leaſt criminal and ingenious. It is perfectly conſiſtent with their principles, and favourable to their deſigns, to render the *former* a dupe to their artifices, and the *latter* a cypher in his dominions; but as millions are involved in your *fate*, it is impoſſible but the clamours of the multitude muſt force its way through the STURDY AND BEGGARLY PHALANX with which you have guarded Carleton-Houſe, and compel

you to acknowledge a truth which filial duty, independant of every political obligation, ought to have ſuggeſted to you.

Recollect, Sir, the hiſtory of the two Men who would arrogate to themſelves the firſt offices in the State; and tremble for the conſequences of your extraordinary partiality!

Recollect that one of them, in time of profound peace, excited a civil war in the diſtant Provinces, by reviving a claim which had been abandoned as impracticable eight years before. The Coloniſts, ſtanding on the adamantine pillars of the Conſtitution, aſſerted that Taxation and Repreſentation were inſeparable; a negative was ſounded from

from the ſhores of America, as from the voice of JOVE; nor has the thunder of the Britiſh arms been able to cancel the irrevocable *fiat* of Truth and Juſtice. Fleets and armies were tranſported, at an enormous expence, to recover by *violence* what had been loſt by *folly*; but as the war was as ill conducted as it was wantonly begun, the events of the conteſt were,—the abſolute loſs of America; a ruinous war with three of the firſt Maritime Powers in Europe; a diminution of commerce, revenue, and dominion; and an increaſe of taxes, which puzzles the ingenuity of finance to raiſe even ſufficient to diſcharge the intereſt of the money voted for the ſupport of Government.

Is it to this wretched Politician, who has deprived his Country of an extent of territory equal to the half of Europe, that you will give your confidence?

Is this Blusterer in Politics, whose capacity and whose views extended no farther than the management of his Mercenaries, and who idly thought, that if he could triumph in Parliament, he could triumph every where else—is this great Luminary in Politics, whom we now see fallen from his sphere, and moving as one of the Satellites in the lesser circle of an inferior Planet, that once performed a subordinate course round his *bright orb*, to be again called forth into public life, that he

he may complete the ruin which he began?

Is it this *great* Miniſter, degraded into a mean and ſervile dependence on the very man who menaced him with the BLOCK in the zenith of his power, for the complicated crimes of venality, treachery, and corruption, that is to work our ſalvation?—— Shame upon ſuch folly!

Let us turn, and behold the immaculate accuſer of his Lordſhip taking the lead in Government, in his turn, and making a voluntary ſurrender of the very little that his *great* predeceſſor had left us.—He diſdained even the merit of contention; and, in order to preſerve a perfect parallel in his moral

moral and political character, he would very generouſly have given away what did not belong to him.

Is it to *ſuch* men, Sir, that you are ſo anxious to confide the ſafety of the Nation? Impoſſible! Were you to pronounce it in my preſence, I ſhould queſtion the fidelity of my ears. Is it from a junction ſo unnatural, that the moſt valuable appendage of the Britiſh Empire is to be preſerved from following the ruinous example of America? or can you ſeriouſly believe that a pie-bald Miniſtry, compoſed of odds and ends, and men of ſtraw, can poſſibly reſtore this Country to her former ſplendor?

You

You may reckon to eternity, Sir; but all the cyphers in the Univerſe will not make an unit. America torn from us by the very root—Ireland on the eve of revolt, and Scotland beating the loud drum of diſcontent to the barren Orkneys, exhibit a very gloomy and humiliating proſpect, while a Faction in the center of the kingdom, under the ſanction of *your* authority, are indefatigably employed to bring their Sovereign and the meaſures of his Government into diſrepute.

Are you to be informed at this period, that your very exiſtence depends upon that of the Empire? Our acres will remain to us through every change that can poſſibly happen. We have only to transfer our allegiance;

giance; but a Revolution conſigns you for ever to abſolute BEGGARY and EXILE. In ſuch a moment of calamity, you will not only find yourſelf without PROPERTY, but without FRIENDS; and the vermine who baſk in the ſun-ſhine of your favour, will be the firſt to abandon you to the rigors of your fate. Let us, however, hope, that an event ſo melancholy to the kingdom, and ruinous to yourſelf, will be prevented by a timely attention to the obligations which you owe to your Country, and your Family. Conſider what you have at ſtake, and baniſh from your confidence and ſociety, a ſet of Men, whoſe pernicious counſels, and profligate manners, have done equal injury to the power and the morals of the Nation.

I will

I will not, Sir, waſte your time, or my own, in commenting on the deſpicable efforts of your Party, to foment the diſturbances which unhappily prevail in Ireland.—Neither, Sir, will I enlarge on the merits of the preſent Adminiſtration: their claim to the public confidence, being founded on their talents and integrity, can neither be injured by *your* clamour, nor augmented by *my* panegyric.

NEPTUNE.

LETTER IV.

To Mr. *F*——.

SIR,

THE weight of government being taken from your ſhoulders, it is to be hoped you are eaſy, if not delighted. You have no longer occaſion to waſte your midnight oil in ſolitary ſtudy and ſilent contemplation. Great Britain has found other friends to fight in her cauſe, and ſupport her intereſts. You, Sir, the late aſpiring Emperor of the Eaſtern World, may now enjoy more placid ſlumbers; and though your burning cheeks are not to be cooled

cooled by the ſpicy gales of Ceylon, nor your bed to be covered with oriental pearl, yet ſweet peace inhabits the academic groves of Brookes's; there the grape ſhall bleed for you, and the companions of your lighter hours, or the miſled tools of your party, ſhall calm your breaſt with admiration which you have never deſerved, and talk of conſequence which you can no longer feel.

But are you not aſhamed, with that deceitful front, to amuſe the people with the ſhew of virtue, while your heart is the ſlave of every vice? Where did you acquire thoſe great, thoſe ſublime ideas of love of your Country, zeal for Liberty, deteſtation of Tyranny? Was it the ſoft embraces of your fair countrywomen that gave the former;

your

your unconſtrained ſacrifices to Bacchus, the ſecond; or, in your religious reſearches, did you acquire the latter by reflections upon Pharoah?

Go forth, Deluder of the People; try your ſtrength once more: if there are idiots ſtill to be found, they perhaps may liſten, and believe you. PITT is young, and, you preſume to think, inexperienced; but he does not tremble—he is firm, and in that firmneſs alone can we look for ſafety. The nation has long ſuffered the lingering fever of deſtructive Faction; all Executive Government has been disjointed: the corrupt majority of the Houſe of Commons has ſeemed to reign; but while it placed a crown of thorns on the Monarch's head, itſelf only ſwayed

a ſceptre of reed. Your party have hitherto loudly exclaimed againſt corruption when out of power. The cry, indeed, has not produced reformation, but it has opened the eyes of every one; and the people will no more think themſelves repreſented; you have forced them to look to a higher power for government and protection. But your influence, Mr. Fox, is at an end: when you mounted your Elephantic Brother, to lead your Coalition troops to triumph over the city of London, it was, in fact, the funeral proceſſion of your political greatneſs. You gazed with eagerneſs on the Elyſian fields of India; but forgot to conſider the ſcourge of poverty, and the vicinity of diſgrace. O may that diſgrace, that poverty continue, and may

juſt

juſt Providence cut off your ſecret reſources of Play, as his wiſdom has annihilated the ſchemes you had laid for overturning the Throne, and for the enſlaving of your Country! Let us reflect a moment upon your political conduct; perhaps it can as ill bear it as your private character: When in power, ambition was apparently your God; when out, Patriotiſm was in your mouth, but the ſame ambition your guide. Your noiſy eloquence, and imagined abilities, which have deceived your Party, have at laſt deceived yourſelf. But let us examine wherein theſe abilities have been ſhewn; in debauchery, in extravagance, in hypocriſy, in abuſe, in meanneſs, in ill-diſguiſed and ill-conducted ambition: they have at length received their reward

ward in part; beware left the completion of the wiſhes of all honeſt men ſhould not happen, before the completion of your own. I am half inclined to drop a tear in pity to your forlorn condition, did not indignation get the better of my humanity.

The approaching Parliament is the firm ſoil on which you build your hopes; there is to be the tournament where you are to tilt with the gallant *Pitt*; attended by many 'Squires you intend to attack the youth in white armour: but conſider, your own is brittle and tranſparent: yet conſole yourſelf, though you ſhould be defeated; the engaging A——d will bind your brows with laurel and with myrtle, amidſt the contempt, the execrations of the multitude.

Review your forces, noble leader, number your troops—a goodly train: you ſeem Leonidas going forth againſt Xerxes: remember him, and be bold; for, amongſt your Captains have you not the great *North*, the ſublime, the beautiful *Burke*, the comic *Sheridan*? Is there not the eloquent *Erſkine*? Have you not the loquacious *Powys*? What think you of Sir *Horace Mann*? He, to the moſt bewitching ſoftneſs of manners, joins a love of freedom, and independency :—unfortunately, his oratorical abilities are apt to be confuſed, and generally in his ſpeeches

> His arguments directly tend
> Againſt the ſide he would defend.

But this is, perhaps, a proof of the ebullition of his genius. I could name another

another, who is himſelf an hoſt; but reſpect, loyalty, hope, forbid me; reſpect for his high rank, loyalty for his Auguſt Family, and hope for his ſpeedy deſertion of your cauſe; a cauſe from which he can derive no advantage, and which by adhering to, will ſpread the couch with thorns, whereon he muſt hereafter repoſe. I ſhall now, Sir, take my leave of you for a time; truſting, however, to your ſteadineſs and perſeverance, to ſhow the world how weak you are; how ſtrong, how well ſupported is Mr. PITT. He will ſoon diſregard the roaring of your eloquence, as the bold ſailor contemns the bluſtering of the winds: he will diſcover to the Nation how much your talents have been exaggerated; and while

he talks of virtue, patriotiſm, and loyalty, give himſelf both the precept and example. Retire, then, from the public ſcene; demand the pity and ſupport of the populace; be a ſecond Beliſarius in wretchedneſs, without his reſpectability. Be aſſured you are become contemptible to the People: they have diſcovered the flame that miſled them to have been phoſphorus, which ſhone brightly, indeed, amidſt the darkneſs of oppoſition, but loſt its luſtre in the blaze of day.

GRACCHUS.

May 5, 1784.

LETTER V.

To Mr. *P*——.

SIR,

THE dignity and conſequence of your preſent ſituation in this country, muſt be highly ſatisfactory to you; and ſo much the more, as it is certainly unparallelled. You find yourſelf at the head of a Miniſtry, who boldly and nobly united to ſave the wounded—the expiring Conſtitution. You enjoy the good opinion and eſteem of a virtuous and patriotic King; you have the ſtrength of the Houſe of Commons on your ſide; the

Peers

Peers are ready to ſupport you; while the People, long torn and diſtracted by faction and falſehood, now gaze upon you with the firm eyes of confidence, and admire and revere the valiant youth who has overthrown the deſperate GOLIAH, that threatened them with perdition. You, Sir, are that valiant youth; you ſtepped forth the DAVID of our hopes, when Fox, armed with the ſhield of imagined popularity, and brandiſhing the ſword of ambition, led on his mad majority with gigantic fury, to ſeize the rich territories of India. A majority much more reſpectable is now eager in the cauſe of Liberty and the Conſtitution, while the few remaining friends of the MODERN CROMWELL can no longer view with delighted aſtoniſhment the brazen

brazen Coloſſus they had wiſhed to rear, the extent of whoſe ſtride was to have reached from the ſhores of Britain to the coaſts of Coromandel; but, on the contrary, can ſcarcely help bluſhing when they think of the preſumption of his ſchemes, which ſhew, in the ſtrongeſt colours, the daring efforts of ſhameleſs anti-patriotiſm. Theſe few friends alſo will ſoon deſert him, as the body of the people have done already, and learn to deſpiſe, like *Caliban*, the inſignificant god they had once adored. But, Sir, the preſent ſtate of this country is ſuch, that every moment may produce events: the minds of the people have been greatly fermented; that fermentation will not eaſily ſubſide; and the torrent of popularity is in theſe times too rapid to be reſiſted:

reſiſted: though you are now ſailing proſperouſly down the ſtream with a ſtrong bark and a rich cargo, yet remember there is a dangerous rock, called *Parliamentary Reform*; I tremble leſt you ſhould ſtrike upon it. In fact, that idea of reform is the ground on which you are to be attacked; but we have ſeen that you can be firm, and we truſt you can be bold in this inſtance. You will not ſhun the combat: to be deciſive will be to triumph; and if you have any reaſon to change your former ſentiments upon this ſubject, the avowing it openly would reflect no diſgrace on a man of any time of life; certainly not of yours. Your illuſtrious Father raiſed his country to a point of greatneſs that ſtill flatters Britain to recollect, that is ſtill aweful for her ene-

mies

mies to remember. You are our young PHOENIX, ſprung from the aſhes of the old. O may your flight be long and glorious! for, ſhould your exertions unfortunately fail, and their effects be deſtroyed by the violence of faction, Great Britain *is ſunk for ever!* You alone, under the preſent circumſtances, can prevent her ſpeedily deſcending to be a PROVINCE OF FRANCE, or her ſons from being the SLAVES OF DESPOTISM. A proper force in the executive part of Government is neceſſary for the preſervation of freedom; for when anarchy and diſcord become general, monarchy, abſolute monarchy, is near at hand. It is a fact well known, that nothing in the political, nor in the natural world can return to its firſt ſtate

by

by a retrograde motion; every thing goes forward; and it is as impoſſible to bring back the conſtitution of England to its earlier ſtate of purity and perfection, as to reſtore to *Fox* infancy, patriotiſm, or virtue. Since then the manners, the thoughts of men change daily; let us conſider that every change in thoſe points makes an alteration neceſſary in the conduct of their rulers. To be guided therefore by Parliamentary precedent is deceitful, uſeleſs, and ridiculous; to become a Parliamentary pedant, a conſequence not unfrequently ariſing from a cloſe application to buſineſs in the Senate, is equally to be dreaded.

Fortunately for England, you are neither;—the maxims of your conduct

are

are drawn from a more extenſive circle; you have early diſcovered, that it is the world at large can alone teach that true mode of government and policy, which, being founded upon juſt and unalterable principles, can never be weakened nor deſtroyed. It has heretofore been conſidered, and I believe propoſed, to alter the repreſentation, by tranſpoſing the Borough Members to be additional County Repreſentatives. This plan ſeems ſpecious enough in theory, but in practice would be fatally abſurd. Have we not already a ſufficiency of ſilent Members, who, proud of their independency, ſleep through the ſeſſions of Parliament without effort or induſtry, and who, conſcious of having weight in their own Counties, torpify the Se-

nate with demonſtration of their heavineſs? The Boroughs, on the contrary, are oftener repreſented by men of abilities: perhaps I am in this mistaken; but to me the reaſon ſeems obvious and indubitable. With regard to the idle plan of giving every man in the country a right to vote, I will only ſay, that it is a notion of folly and injuſtice, totally inſufficient to produce other than the moſt pernicious effects. For theſe reaſons, therefore, I am ſure it will be difficult, and not feaſible, in our preſent ſtate of luxury and corruption, to have a more pure, uninfluenced, and fair Parliament than the preſent, to be ſerviceable towards the good of the country. May you long direct its reſolves, till a new ſtrength pervades every part of the

the kingdom, till our Finances are retrieved, our Commerce reſtored, our ſpirit and our ſupplies uſefully employed, our glory and reſpectability greater than ever, and till extreme old-age may alone force you to retire! It is but too true, that you have a determined oppoſer in Fox; but a formidable one I can never think him, not even though reinforced by the united infamy of Lord N——: the former's abilities are diſcovered to be ſuperficial; he can talk, but he cannot act. Every man of ſenſe, unbiaſſed by party, knows him to be, *Vox et præterea nihil*; and though, as Cicero ſaid of Catiline, "*Imo etiam in ſenatum* "*venit, notat et deſignat oculis ad* "*cædem unumquemque veſtrum*;" yet a contemptuous diſregard will, in the end,

end, ſubdue him; it will have a greater effect than the moſt laboured arguments, or the moſt eloquent replies. From the latter he will acquire ammunition to prolong the fight, as a General returns again the balls fired at him, to the deſtruction of the beſieged.

I will only trouble you with a few words more, to obſerve that the factious ſpirit which has nearly deſtroyed Great Britain, will, without immediate care and vigour, for ever ſeparate Ireland from this country. This, Sir, you well know: you have alſo made a buſineſs to diſcover the ſecret means employed to foment thoſe diſturbances; and are rightly informed where the cauſe exiſts, both at home

and

and abroad. It remains only for you to act with ſpirit: the genius of the people of England is ſuch, that courage is always adored by them; and a meaſure ſeldom fails to meet their approbation, when executed with boldneſs. Convince then the politicians throughout Europe, that they are in an error when they conclude this country to be loſt, or at leaſt devoted to deſtruction. Shew them, while you have yet the moment in your power, that a young man of twenty-five years of age, when poſſeſſed of wiſdom, firmneſs, virtue, and honour, can reſcue a falling country from the graſp of domeſtic faction, and the artful encroachments of foreign machinations.

GRACCHUS.

LETTER VI.

To the P—— of ——.

SIR,

AWAKE from your dream of pleaſure, O P— of ——! rouſe yourſelf whilſt the effort is yet poſſible, and burſt forth, a reſplendent Sun, through the lowering fog of juvenile indiſcretion; revive the drooping hopes of your Royal Father's ſubjects; excell your predeceſſor, the facetious HAL, as much in the glory of a reformation, as you have already outdone him in the thoughtleſſneſs of your con-

connexions, and the profuſion of your errors. Alas! on every ſide we hear the murmur of diſcontent; and Patriotiſm gazes on you with the penſive eye of expreſſive anguiſh. Then reflect, great Sir! upon the conſequences that will inevitably follow your preſent political attachments; they muſt, I fear, be fatal to your Country and to yourſelf. It is true, indeed, that the variety of E——ts, P——as, and F——ts, your midnight orgies, and wild extravagance, have called forth our aſtoniſhment; but it is your conſtancy to Fox that alone leads us to deſpair. Your private irregularities we ſhall chiefly feel from ſympathy for the deſtruction of your health, and a conſequent loſs of happineſs; but your public proceedings threaten a more

more ſerious puniſhment, a woe laſting and ſevere, that may extend for ages over generations of your Countrymen. Then be the reverſe of the Roman Sylla; take up unexpectedly a more glorious empire than he reſigned, the ſovereignty over the hearts of Britons: ſo ſhall the avowed diſapprobation that now pervades all ranks, be changed to joy and worſhip; ſo ſhall the ſilent ſorrow that hangs on the regal brows, be turned to ſatisfaction the moſt triumphant, and tenderneſs unſpeakable; while winds of extacy ſhall ſpread the happy tidings from the Frozen Ocean to the banks of the Ganges.

Juſt Heaven! what powerful Demon has robbed you of our love? The

The dignified ſtation you hold was ever popular till now; and even at this moment, when the People profeſs the moſt unbounded contempt for your conduct, yet they cannot ceaſe to feel an inviolable attachment to your perſon. And let me aſſure your R—— H———, that your entrance into life was expected with the ardour of hope, with far other ſentiments than are now become general: we looked to enjoy a fair ſpring and a ſerene ſky, but were ſuddenly overtaken with the dark gloom of an untimely tempeſt.

Muſt we then ſeek in vain for that liberality of mind, and thoſe rich qualities which ſhould naturally attend you, and which ſeem to be your hereditary right? They might help to

palliate the unworthineſs of your purſuits. Yes, whatever is great and arduous, you have learnt to diſregard; and though you can be well ſatisfied, like Ulyſſes, to loiter in the iſland of Calypſo, yet you would reluctantly undertake the guidance of Councils, or the fatigues of war.

It has been ſaid, and I fear by ſome of your intimates (I will not call them friends) with a treachery unparallelled, that a narrow ſelfiſhneſs is the motive of all your actions, that the gratification of the moment is the ſole purpoſe of your exiſtence. Yet it remains with you to counteract the malice of ſuch aſſertions: let your mind only correſpond with the comelineſs of your perſon, and the nobleneſs of your countenance;

be

be but half as active to acquire eſteem, as you have been to loſe it; and you will riſe to a height of ſplendour as incomparable as uncommon.

But let us examine in what hitherto your activity has been ſhewn, what have been your Herculean labours. The enquiry is too odious: they would better ſuit Sylenus, or a Satyr. The Hiſtory of your OWN TIME, if compriſed in a volume, would perhaps be curious; but the recitals it would contain, inſtead of tinging your cheeks with the glow of vanity, ought rather to crimſon it with ſhame, and cover you with confuſion. Can a —— of —— place the point of excellence in ſuch mean endeavours? Debauchery and diſſipation diſtinguiſh only in proportion

portion as they consign to censure. Let even that idea check your progress towards imperfection; a progress which has hitherto increased, with the rapidity of a Comet in its approach to the Sun.

If, Sir, your pursuit of women (the most meritorious occupation of your life) had been marked with sentiment or affection in any instance, we might probably in some degree have approved your conduct: had you never boasted when you failed, the world would have less condemned you when successful; but, though you can only talk of conquests, there are others who mention defeats.

Think then, Sir, what your Country feels at present, bleeding with the wounds

wounds of a late war, labouring under deranged Finances and an exhauſted Treaſury; to have the additional horror of obſerving that her elder hope, the flower of ſucceſſion, is inſenſible to her ſufferings, and ſupports the moſt deſperate Faction that ever menaced the deſtruction of her Liberty! Once more therefore let me conjure you, for your own ſake and the ſake of Britain, to quit the fatal road in which you have already too long wandered; it is ſurrounded by alarming precipices: and can you, whoſe education has been truly reſpectable, give us ſo bad a proof of your underſtanding, as to imagine that by ſupporting that Arch-Hypocrite *F*—, you aſſiſt a friend, whoſe gratitude in public life would equal his profeſſions in private? Indulge not the

ſuppoſition;

ſuppoſition; be not ſo miſled: for, ſhould you mount the Throne to-morrow (which may gracious Heaven forbid theſe many years!) you would be made ſubſervient to his all-graſping ſchemes; and, from having been the tool of his Party, you would become the inſtrument of his ambition. You might indeed be permitted to parade through the ſtreets of London, adorned with the glittering enſigns of Royalty; but, like captive John of France, you would have a BLACK PRINCE near you, with inſulting humility to diſappoint your wiſhes, and to controul your power.

I will here take notice, that perhaps the unfortunate cauſe of your miſtakes in life, may be deduced from that falſe faſhion

faſhion which at this time reigns with unbounded deſpotiſm, and is indeed peculiar to England. Refinement of mind and manners is here ſuppoſed to exiſt in a kind of capricious indifference, a cold inſolence, an extenſive contempt of ſentiment, and a ſhameleſs affectation of vice. We have ſeen perſons of low origin and mean talents, without virtue or fortune, merely by adopting this ſyſtem, enjoy to the utmoſt the *glorious* privilege of permitted rudeneſs, become the arbitrary directors of Taſte, and even obtain the exertion of power; while men of birth and abilities, becauſe modeſt and unaſſuming, have been neglected and deſpiſed. But your R—— H—— has thought proper to imitate the former, at leaſt in reſpect to morals; and it muſt

muſt be owned you have done it with an exactneſs that reflects more honour upon the preciſeneſs of your obſervation, than upon the maturity of your judgment. Yes, Sir, while you ſhould have given a mode of reſpectability to the manners of your Country, you chuſe to be a copy of the moſt deſpicable originals.

Let me employ one moment more to obſerve, that the intimacy you have formed with high perſonages of a neighbouring Kingdom has given an alarm, perhaps not unreaſonable; for be it known to you, that the French are a perfidious Nation, active to procure evil to this Country. They may now probably think to have found an inſtance where the acknowledged profligacy

ſligacy of the D—— de *C*—— may be turned to ſome account.

I have only to add, that, though theſe imperfect ſentences may appear to breathe a ſpirit of reproof unpleaſing to your R—— H------, yet the heart of the writer is moſt devotedly yours; no hireling ſcribbler, nor ſlave of any Party, but attached, by the moſt determined loyalty and affection, to your auguſt Family: he only breaks through the ſilent reſpect, profeſſed in a former letter, from the conviction of the neceſſity for ſo doing, and an ardent intereſt in your glory, happineſs, and proſperity.

GRACCHUS.

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